

CLAIMS

1 1. A method of load balancing messages to servers of a server farm, by a load
2 balancer, comprising:

3 configuring the load balancer with information on the session ID values which may be
4 assigned by at least one of the servers;

5 determining, by the load balancer, for at least some client messages including a non-
6 empty session ID field, which server or sub-group of servers is associated with the ID in the
7 ID field, responsive to the configured information; and

8 selecting, by the load balancer, a server to receive each of the at least some client
9 messages, at least partially responsive to the determination.

1 2. A method according to claim 1, wherein configuring the load balancer
2 comprises managing a table which lists for at least one of the servers or sub-groups of servers
3 a range of values from which the server may assign session IDs.

1 3. A method according to claim 1, wherein configuring the load balancer
2 comprises managing a table which lists for at least one of the servers or sub-groups of servers,
3 one or more values of a sub-set of the bits of session IDs associated with the server.

1 4. A method according to claim 1, wherein configuring the load balancer
2 comprises providing a function which correlates between session IDs and the server which
3 assigned the session ID.

1 5. A method according to claim 1, comprising configuring at least one of the
2 servers with a rule on the session ID values it may assign to sessions.

1 6. A method according to claim 5, wherein configuring the load balancer
2 comprises configuring through a user interface, which configures both the load balancer and at
3 least one of the servers responsive to user instructions.

1 7. A method according to claim 5, wherein configuring the load balancer
2 comprises configuring automatically by a module running on the load balancer, which
3 transmits configuration instructions to at least one of the servers.

1 8. A method according to claim 7, wherein configuring automatically by the load
2 balancer comprises configuring responsive to input received from the at least one of the
3 servers.

1 9. A method according to claim 5, wherein configuring at least one of the servers
2 comprises configuring substantially all the servers in the farm with respective sub-groups of
3 allowed session IDs which do not include common session IDs.

1 10. A method according to claim 9, wherein at least some of a plurality of available
2 session IDs are not assigned to any of the servers.

1 11. A method according to claim 9, wherein configuring substantially all the
2 servers comprises assigning substantially a same number of session IDs to each of the servers.

1 12. A method according to claim 9, wherein configuring substantially all the
2 servers comprises assigning different numbers of session IDs to at least two of the servers.

1 13. A method according to claim 1, wherein configuring the load balancer
2 comprises configuring by a system manager.

1 14. A method according to claim 1, wherein selecting a server to receive a client
2 message comprises selecting a server which assigned the session ID of the message.

1 15. A method according to claim 1, wherein selecting a server to receive a client
2 message comprises selecting a server in a sub-group of servers which shares information with
3 a server which assigned the session ID of the message.

1 16. A method according to claim 1, wherein the client messages comprise SSL
2 client messages.

1 17. A method according to claim 1, wherein the session ID values comprise
2 application layer ID values.

1 18. A method according to claim 1, additionally comprising managing a list of ID
2 values actually assigned by one or more servers and determining, by the load balancer, for at
3 least some client messages including a non-empty session ID field, which server or sub-group
4 of servers is associated with the ID in the ID field, responsive to the managed list.

1 19. A load balancer, comprising:
2 a memory unit adapted to store configured information on session ID values which
3 may be assigned by at least one of the servers;
4 an input interface adapted to receive client messages; and

5 a load balancing unit which is adapted to select a server to receive at least one of the
6 client messages, at least partially responsive to the contents of the memory unit, and to
7 forward the at least one of the client messages to the selected server.

1 20. A load balancer according to claim 19, comprising a configuration module
2 adapted to store the configured information in the memory unit.

1 21. A load balancer according to claim 20, wherein the configuration module is
2 adapted to generate instructions directed to one or more servers on the session ID values they
3 may use.

1 22. A load balancer according to claim 19, wherein the load balancing unit
2 comprises a comparator adapted to compare at least a portion of at least one of the fields of
3 received client messages to information stored in the memory unit.